

SALT Church

Romans 8:22-31

“Sovereign Groaning”

December 28, 2025

“The Greatest Book Ever Written”

David and Cindy

Recap

Romans 8:19-21

¹⁹ For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. ²⁰ Against its will, all creation was subjected to God’s curse. But with eager hope, ²¹ the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

- Last week we discovered a connection between creation and the curse that God had placed on creation.
 - The connection was this:
 - **Man was created by God from the dust of the earth.**
 - Everything that man has (**with the exception of our sin and redemption through Christ**) comes from the earth. (creation)
 - Therefore, when man sinned and was cursed because of our sin, all creation was cursed by God.
- ***This led us to our second conclusion:***
 - The redemption of man will also lead to the redemption of creation.

- This is why all creation is eagerly waiting for the children of God to be revealed.

Now we pick up where we left off:

Romans 8:22-30

²² For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

- How does “all creation groan?”
 - What does it look like?
- Have you ever considered how the earth and everything in it was changed by the flood?
 - Genesis 7:11-12, **¹¹ When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the underground waters erupted from the earth, and the rain fell in mighty torrents from the sky. ¹² The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights.**
 - “Waters erupted from the earth” what does that mean?
 - Genesis 1 tells us that on the 1st day of creation that the earth was covered with water.
 - On the third day of creation God separated the land from the water.
 - Meaning He push the land up and out until it appeared.
 - Which in turn the water back filled where the land used to be.
 - This is why there is so much water underground.

When the flood occurred, the reverse happened.

- This would cause a shifting in the plates upon which all land rest.
- Then when the flood waters receded there was another shifting.
 - Why would I bring this to your attention?
 - All earthquakes and Tsunami's are the result of the flood.
 - This is just one part of the groaning of the earth.

Thinks about this:

- Noah's flood has been rejected by most scientist. (Just not possible)
 - Yet, all the fossil fuel that we pull out of the ground, for over a hundred years so far, is the proof of the flood.
 - Oil and gas are the evidence of rich organic material that was quickly covered and placed under great pressure.
 - For over a hundred years we have been pulling this stuff out of the ground, creating more void spaces.

What's your point Pastor?

- When Revelation speaks of future "global earthquakes" it makes sense to me.
- Revelation describes global earthquakes.
 - Earthquakes cause tsunamis which cause even greater distruction.
 - Earthquakes and tsunamis are just one part of the groanings.
 - Tornados, hurricanes, wildfires, volcanos, flooding, are all just part of the groaning of creation.
 - But the saddest groaning of creation is death.

Think about this:

- Every year creation does its best **to overcome** all this destruction.
 - Every spring there is a rebirth of nature.
 - This rebirth leads to summer, but we all know what follows summer don't we.
 - Fall and then winter.
 - They are reminders of the curse that each of us will follow if we are given enough time.

Why would you bring that up Pastor?

- *It is good to contemplate your own death!*

Ecclesiastes 7:2-4

² Better to spend your time at funerals than at parties.

After all, everyone dies— so the living should take this to heart.

*³ Sorrow is better than laughter,
for sadness has a refining influence on us.*

*⁴ A wise person thinks a lot about death,
while a fool thinks only about having a good time.*

What kind of church is this?

- We believe that the Bible is a wise book
- We believe that everything written in it is the truth
- **YES, we groan and grieve**
 - But we do it with hope and eager anticipation

Back to Romans 8

*²³ And **we believers also groan**, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.*

Amen!

- **We know how this ends**

- We understand that our momentary suffering will not compare to an eternity with Him in Heaven.
 - *When were we given this hope?*

²⁴ We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. ²⁵ But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

- **What's Paul talking about?**

- **He is talking about the presents underneath the tree!**

- My grandson James loves Christmas.
- He loves to help decorate and he loves finding the presents under the tree (especially the ones have his name on them.)
 - He knows that they are his but not until Christmas day.
 - Do you understand what I'm trying to say?
 - We have been given the gift of forgiveness and eternity.

- Our names are written on it!
- But we can only see the gift on this side of Heaven.
- But one day when we pass from this life to the next, we will finally receive the gift that was prepared for us even before we were born.

What about now Pastor?

- *What about my pain and suffering now?*

- ***You are not alone!!!!***

- Our pain and suffering will be used by God to shape and mold us into Jesus' likeness
 - We must remember that the gospel is not “believe in Jesus and all of your problems go away.”
 - The gospel is believing in Jesus and he is more than enough to get you through your problems, pain, and suffering.

Jesus promised to never leave us nor forsake us but what does that mean and look like?

Listen to the words of Jesus

John 15:26

²⁶ “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

- What does that mean?

- Paul says it this way in Romans 8:

²⁶ And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for.

But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.

²⁷ And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.

- Have you ever been there?

- Questioning God's will for your life or the life of someone that you love?
 - Have you cried out ***not knowing what to do*** or what to pray for?

- **HE HEARS YOU!**

- Not only does He hear you, but The Holy Spirit pleads for you.

- ***Think about that...***

- God the Holy Spirit talks to God the Father about your pain, your suffering, your greatest need.

- ***That's powerful!!!!***

Back to Romans 8

28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

Be careful with this verse!

- People who are in the middle of great pain & suffering are not ready to receive this truth.
 - With the Lord's help they will be ready to receive this but too often, well-meaning Christians say this at the wrong time.
 - So, Be wise,
 - Be compassionate
 - Be a comfort and not a “know it all.”

But Pastor is that verse the truth?

- ***God causes everything?***

- **God does not cause sin, that's on us.**

- But God can take a messed up, sinful moment and use it for His glory.

- ***Consider Jesus***

- Sinless life and yet He was murdered for preaching the truth.
 - God used it for Jesus' good and His glory.
 - He caused everything in that situation to work together for our good and His glory.

**When something bad, unfair, or even outright wrong happens
remember this truth:**

- What man has planned for evil God can use it for good.
 - And He will
 - It may take some time
 - You may not understand until you stand before Him
 - ***This is where we must have complete faith in His plan.***

Back to Romans

- **These next two verses will cause some to struggle with God**
- **Some will have more questions than answers**
 - I'm good with the struggle and the questions
 - Please come to me
 - Email me so that you can process all that is said.
 - No matter what you think you must believe what the word of God says.
 - I'm not saying that you have to fully understand it.
 - But you must agree with what is written.

(side note)

- You need to know:
 - I wrestled with this for a very long time
 - Then one day I surrendered to the truth of the Word
 - Here we go!

29 For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

- “God knew His people in advance”
 - In advance of what?
 - All things?

Revelation 13:8 (supports Romans 8:29)

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him (Satan), whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

- In other words, every person who would be saved (child of God) their names were written in the Lambs Book of Life before the earth was created.

Revelation 21:27

27 Nothing evil will be allowed to enter (talking about Heaven), nor anyone who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty—but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

So, clearly, we can conclude that God the Father knew in advance of the creation of the world who His children are.

“and he chose them to become like his Son,”

Original Word: προορίζω

Part of Speech: Verb

Pronunciation: pro-or-ID-zo

Phonetic Spelling: (pro-or-id'-zo)

KJV: determine before, ordain, predestinate

NASB: predestined

Word Origin: [from G4253 (πρό - before) and G3724 (ὁρίζω - determined)]

1. to limit in advance

2. predetermine

“God chose”

- **“God predestined”**

- **Here is the rub for most Christians**
- Most of us have been taught that we chose Jesus but Paul through the power of the Holy Spirit says that God chose us.
- Does this mean that man had no response in the matter?
 - No, it simply means that God made Himself irresistible to us.
- The debate comes in the global proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ as Lord.
 - Can man receive Christ without God's help?
 - Are we so sinful that all we crave is sin, unless God opens our eyes to the truth?
 - What does the Bible say?

Jeremiah 17:9

***9 “The heart is deceitful above all things,
And desperately wicked;***

Paul the writer of Romans 8:29 understood this better than anyone else.

- When Christ called Paul to Himself, Paul was an enemy of Christ.
- He was arresting Christians
- Promoting the murder of Christians
- He wanted nothing to do with Jesus but then Jesus said **you are mine.**

Acts 9

9 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of **“the Way”**, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

3 As he journeyed, he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. **4** Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”

5 And he said, **“Who are You, Lord?”**

Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. **It is hard for you to kick against the goads.**”

6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, **“Lord, what do You want me to do?”**

Then the Lord *said* to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

Paul, an enemy of God **was chosen**.

Okay Pastor but what about where it says that God does not desire that anyone should perish?

- If it is all about God choosing, why does He hold man accountable?
- Why would He hold evangelist accountable for not sharing the gospel?
- Doesn't this make God responsible for sin?

No, man is responsible for sin, we all know that to be true.

- God holds everyone accountable for not doing the things that we know we should do.
 - Just like I will be held accountable for what I teach and **I choose not to teach.**
- Man is held accountable for his sin
- Every child that is born is naturally drawn to sin,
 - no one has to teach a child to sin.
 - This is the evil and wicked heart that we inherited.

It is true that God does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked.

Ezekiel 33:11

¹¹As surely as I live, says the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of wicked people. I only want them to turn from their wicked ways so they can live. Turn! Turn from your wickedness, O people of Israel! Why should you die?

Pastor, why would say that if He is responsible for who is chosen?

- God's desire is different from His decree.

I have two children, both are married.

- I have two grandchildren

I desire that they walk with God in everything that they do.

- When they lived in my house they followed my rules.
- But now they are married.
 - My desire is that they walk with God
 - Because they are married, they no longer fall under my authority.
 - My decrees for them no longer carry any weight.
 - Desire and decrees are different.

Like God I watch and know when bad decisions will lead to difficult circumstances.

- I take no pleasure in watching.

When we become children of God it is because **He chose us.**

- The scripture is very clear on this matter.

John 6:37 (Jesus talking)

³⁷ However, those the Father has given me will come to me, and I will never reject them.

John 6:43-44

43 But Jesus replied, “Stop complaining about what I said. 44 For no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them to me, and at the last day I will raise them up.

John 17:1-2

17 After saying all these things, Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so he can give glory back to you. 2 For you have given him authority over everyone. He gives eternal life to each one you have given him.

John 17:6

6 “I have revealed you to the ones you gave me from this world. They were always yours. You gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

Can you see why I struggled with what I had been taught?

- **The gospel of John turned my understanding of my salvation upside down.**
- **You may still struggle with this but what do you do with these verses that were spoken by our King and Savior?**
 - **What am I saying?**
 - **If we are responsible for our salvation, what do we do with these scriptures that clearly say that He is responsible for our salvation?**
 - **Do I fully understand it?**
 - **No**
 - **But I fully believe it!**

Back to Romans 8

³⁰ ***And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. (so clear) And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.***

What do we do with all this Pastor?

- Wrestle with it
- Accept it
- Embrace it
- ALLOW IT to change how you pray for and witness to people.
 - The harvest is ready!
 - What does that mean?
 - It means they are out there ready to hear the gospel and they are ready to respond to it.
 - It means that even the most horrible enemies of God can be changed and transformed by the gospel.
 - It means there is hope even for the worst of people!
 - Why?
 - Because God is sovereign over all
 - Especially salvation

Let me pray for you.